



Implementation of 'Safe from Harm' in Scouting to Support Students Mental Health

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Article Info	Abstract
Article History Received: 2024-12-15 Revised: 2025-01-22 Published: 2025-02-05 Keywords: <i>Mental Health;</i> <i>Scouts;</i> <i>Safe from Harm.</i>	The mental health of students has become a growing concern due to increasing pressures from academic demands, social interactions, and social media. This study focuses on the role of Scouting activities as an extracurricular activity in supporting students' mental health through preventive and promotive strategies. The goal is to assess the impact of Scouting activities in developing mental resilience, enhancing social skills, and implementing the Safe from Harm principle introduced by the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM) to ensure psychological safety. This study uses a qualitative approach, gathering data through interviews, observations, and documentation from the East Java Scout Movement Regional Office. The analysis indicates that Scouting activities effectively enhance communication skills, self-confidence, and create a secure environment through the Safe from Harm principle. Challenges include limited training and awareness among instructors and inadequate infrastructure in rural areas. Suggested solutions include regular training sessions, reinforcing context-specific security policies, and fostering external collaborations. The findings of this study underscore the significance of Scouting activities as an effective approach to supporting students' mental health.
Artikel Info	Abstrak
Sejarah Artikel Diterima: 2024-12-15 Direvisi: 2025-01-22 Dipublikasi: 2025-02-05 Kata kunci: <i>Kesehatan Mental;</i> <i>Pramuka;</i> <i>Aman dari Bahaya.</i>	Kesehatan mental siswa telah menjadi perhatian yang semakin berkembang akibat meningkatnya tekanan dari tuntutan akademis, interaksi sosial, dan media sosial. Penelitian ini berfokus pada peran kegiatan Pramuka sebagai kegiatan ekstrakurikuler dalam mendukung kesehatan mental siswa melalui strategi preventif dan promotif. Tujuannya adalah untuk menilai dampak kegiatan Pramuka dalam mengembangkan ketahanan mental, meningkatkan keterampilan sosial, dan menerapkan prinsip Safe from Harm yang diperkenalkan oleh Organisasi Gerakan Pramuka Dunia (WOSM) untuk memastikan keamanan psikologis. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif, mengumpulkan data melalui wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi dari Kantor Wilayah Gerakan Pramuka Jawa Timur. Analisis menunjukkan bahwa kegiatan Pramuka secara efektif meningkatkan keterampilan komunikasi, kepercayaan diri, dan menciptakan lingkungan yang aman melalui prinsip Safe from Harm. Tantangan yang dihadapi termasuk pelatihan dan kesadaran yang terbatas di kalangan instruktur serta infrastruktur yang tidak memadai di daerah pedesaan. Solusi yang disarankan meliputi sesi pelatihan rutin, memperkuat kebijakan keamanan yang sesuai dengan konteks, dan mendorong kolaborasi eksternal. Temuan penelitian ini menekankan pentingnya kegiatan Pramuka sebagai pendekatan yang efektif untuk mendukung kesehatan mental siswa.

I. INTRODUCTION

The mental health of students has become an increasingly important issue in recent years, particularly as the challenges faced by today's youth have become more complex. In addition to rising academic pressures, students face social pressures from peers and the impact of social media, making them more susceptible to mental health issues. Research by the World Health Organization (WHO) indicates that around 10-20% of children and adolescents worldwide experience mental health disorders, with anxiety

and depression being the most common (Sehatnegeriku.kemkes.go.id, 2024).

In Indonesia, a recent survey found that over 17 million adolescents experience mental health problems, including anxiety disorders, depression, and behavioral issues (ugm.ac.id, 2022). Poor mental health can negatively affect academic performance, reduce motivation, and hinder social relationships with family, peers, and teachers, making it a critical issue for educators and parents to address (Joshep, 2023).

In education, maintaining good mental health is essential for developing students' resilience,

social skills, and independence. As Lu highlights, mental health education improves psychological well-being, builds resilience, and enhances social skills and independence, all of which are vital for academic success and personal development in a supportive educational environment (Lu, 2024).

Thus, modern education systems must provide an environment that supports both the mental and emotional well-being of students, which can be achieved through extracurricular activities that focus on character development and social skills. Extracurricular activities have long been recognized as a valuable means of supporting students' mental health. According to Patle, participation in extracurricular activities helps improve mental health by encouraging self-expression, enhancing interpersonal skills, building self-confidence, and promoting stress management, while also reducing the risk of mental disorders and boosting emotional well-being (Patle, 2024). These findings align with research by Décarpentrie et al., which suggests that extracurricular activities positively affect young people, especially in challenging contexts, by improving psychological well-being and addressing basic psychological needs, thus supporting mental health and personal development (Décarpentrie et al., 2024).

One form of extracurricular activity that has been shown to be particularly effective in promoting students' mental health is Scouting. Scouting is an organization designed to develop students' character, life skills, and leadership through various outdoor activities. Research by Antika et al. found that Scouting activities improve mental health by fostering mental resilience, social skills, responsibility, self-esteem, and problem-solving abilities through collaborative outdoor experiences (Antika, W. et al., 2024). This is consistent with findings from Farhana et al., who reported that Scouting activities enhance leadership, responsibility, courage, cooperation, and positively contribute to students' mental well-being and personal development through structured challenges and teamwork (Farhana et al., 2024).

Furthermore, outdoor activities, a key component of Scouting, offer significant psychological benefits. A study by Irimia concluded that participating in Scouting activities greatly contributes to students' well-being and health by enhancing mental health and emotional balance through engagement in outdoor activities (Irimia, 2021). This is further supported by Nugraha's research, which indicates that outdoor

activities help improve mental health by reducing stress, enhancing mood, promoting better sleep quality, and fostering emotional balance by allowing individuals to recover from daily stresses (Nugraha et al., 2024).

The Gerakan Pramuka (Indonesian Scout Movement) is also deeply committed to protecting the mental and physical health of its members through the "Safe from Harm" policy initiated by the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM). This policy aims to create a safe and supportive environment free from violence, intimidation, and harassment, which can negatively affect mental health. According to the Safe from Harm document, Scouting organizations must provide an environment where students feel valued, supported, and emotionally and physically safe. These efforts are vital for preventing mental health issues and promoting the emotional well-being of Scouts (World Scout Bureau Inc, 2022).

However, the reputation of the Scouting Movement has been marred by cases of bullying during Scouting activities, which have harmed the physical and mental health of students. One such incident occurred at SMAN 1 Ciamis in West Java, where students were subjected to violence by seniors and alumni during Scouting activities (Medcom.id, 2022). Another tragic case involved sexual violence committed by a Scoutmaster against his students in Surabaya, which led to police intervention (jatim.tribunnews.com, 2024). This phenomenon of bullying and sexual violence is often compared to the iceberg theory, where the visible cases represent only a small portion of a much larger, hidden problem.

Given these issues, this study aims to explore the role of Scouting activities in supporting students' mental health. The objectives of the research are to assess how Scouting activities contribute to mental health through preventive and promotive approaches, analyze the implementation of WOSM's Safe from Harm principles in Scouting activities, and examine the challenges faced in applying these principles, along with proposed solutions. The study will also provide insights into how Scouting activities can help develop other important psychological aspects such as resilience, emotional control, and interpersonal skills in students.

II. METHOD

This study adopted a qualitative approach, selected for its suitability in gathering data with specific objectives and applications. The research

design employed was field research, where the researchers directly visited the study site to collect data. The field research was conducted at the East Java Regional Quarters of the Scout Movement. The goal of field research is to gain a deep understanding of the problem's context, the current situation, and the interactions within the environment of a social unit, such as individuals, groups, institutions, or communities (Sugiono, 2014). Qualitative methods involve observing individuals in their natural setting and making efforts to comprehend their language and behavior.

The data for this study were sourced from both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources refer to data obtained directly from the participants, such as interviews with the East Java Regional Scout Movement management and Scout leaders at the local units. Secondary sources, on the other hand, provide data indirectly through other parties or documents. Data were systematically and standardizedly collected using several methods, including observation, interviews, and documentation. To ensure data validity and credibility, the study employed techniques such as triangulation, which involves cross-checking data from various sources, methods, and time periods. Additionally, the study made use of reference materials, extended the observation period, and increased researcher persistence (Moleong, 2010).

The data analysis process is designed to systematically search for and organize the information collected through interviews, field notes, and other materials, with the goal of enhancing the research results and presenting the findings (Emzir, 2014). Once the data were collected, the researchers analyzed and related them to the theories that guided the research. Data analysis was performed in two stages: data reduction and data presentation (Sugiono, 2014).

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Scouting plays a crucial role in supporting learners' mental health by adopting preventive and promotive approaches. These activities not only help develop technical and leadership skills but also promote social and emotional values vital for mental well-being. The "Safe from Harm" principle by the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM) enhances these efforts by establishing safety and psychological protection measures to prevent bullying and safeguard participants' mental health (World Scout Bureau, 2022).

Scouting activities integrate social and emotional values crucial for mental health, aligning with research by Hajid and Ismail (2023), which shows that scouting can foster prosocial behaviors among members. This enhances cooperation, empathy, and emotional skills like stress resilience and positive social interaction, which are essential for mental well-being. Interviews and observations suggest that active participation in scouting helps develop communication skills, self-confidence, and mutual support in a safe environment. Scouting activities, aimed at building character and social skills, support learners' mental health by employing preventive and promotive approaches.

The preventive approach focuses on preventing mental health issues like anxiety and stress by teaching learners how to manage emotions, build independence, and strengthen adaptability. Research indicates that children and adolescents involved in scouting have a reduced risk of mental disorders (Kirchhoff et al., 2024). Scouting activities such as camping, responsibility training, and hiking equip participants with essential stress-coping skills. The promotive approach in scouting provides an environment that fosters self-confidence and strong interpersonal skills. Activities like group discussions, team games, and collaborative problem-solving offer emotional support from peers. Studies by WOSM demonstrate that participation in scouting boosts self-confidence and emotional well-being (World Scout Bureau, 2016).

The WOSM's "Safe from Harm" principle is critical for ensuring a safe environment, free from physical and mental harm, to foster learners' mental growth. This principle incorporates training, safety guidelines, supervision, and emotional well-being education for participants (World Scout Bureau, 2016). Interviews with scout leaders and administrators revealed that the Safe from Harm principle is being implemented through various policies and practices, including required training on learner protection and risk management, and rules to report incidents of bullying or verbal abuse. Observations show that active supervision minimizes intimidating behavior, and ethical standards are outlined in policy documents, creating a supportive and safe environment for participants.

The Safe from Harm principle aligns with Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory, which emphasizes the role of the environment in

human development. This theory suggests that human development is shaped by interactions between individuals and their broader social environments. Implementing Safe from Harm in scouting helps create a micro-environment that supports psychological growth, in line with Bronfenbrenner's focus on environmental influences on individuals (Bronfenbrenner, 2006).

Challenges in implementing Safe from Harm include the need for greater awareness of psychological safety, difficulties in monitoring activities, and inconsistent knowledge of psychological risks among members and coaches. Interviews revealed that there is insufficient structured training, especially in remote areas, and some incidents not conforming to the Safe from Harm principle were not documented properly. To address these challenges, solutions include regular mental health training for coaches, developing situation-based safety policies, improving infrastructure, and promoting awareness of Safe from Harm from the beginning. Additionally, creating a system for early detection and reporting of safety violations is crucial (Kwarnas, 2021).

The principles of Safe from Harm are closely related to Edmondson's Psychological Safety Model, which highlights the importance of a safe environment for group success. Psychological safety fosters an environment where individuals feel safe to express themselves, voice their opinions, and share ideas without fear of negative consequences to their image or status (Edmondson, 1999).

IV. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

A. Conclusion

Scouting activities contribute significantly to supporting students' mental health by utilizing both preventive and promotive strategies. The preventive aspect focuses on helping students manage mental health risks, like anxiety and stress, by enhancing emotional skills, fostering independence, and building adaptability. On the other hand, the promotive approach offers social and emotional support, which boosts participants' self-confidence and overall emotional well-being. The Safe from Harm principle of the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM) ensures a secure environment free from physical and psychological harm, aligning with Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory. This principle emphasizes the need

for coach training, continuous supervision, and safety policies that protect participants. However, challenges in implementing this principle include insufficient structured training, varying levels of awareness among coaches, and limited resources, particularly in remote locations. Potential solutions to address these issues include regular training, the creation of situation-specific safety protocols, and greater collaboration with external partners. The Safe from Harm principle also aligns with Edmondson's psychological safety model, which stresses the importance of creating an environment where individuals feel safe to express themselves without fearing negative consequences.

B. Suggestion

The discussion related to this research is still very limited and requires a lot of input, suggestions for future authors are to study it more deeply and comprehensively about Implementation of 'Safe from Harm' in Scouting to Support Students Mental Health.

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